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From Abbotts' Magazine.

## A SCENE IN A FAMILY—SUNDAY MORNING AFTER BREAKFAST.

The family in which I have long lived are considered good moral people, and the head of it is a pious man. His wife generally agrees with him upon religious topics, but in any way irritated, she will oppose him, by staying from meeting, or absenting herself from family prayers. The cause of her opposition may arise in the first place, from not according altogether with his wishes in some trifling affair. A dispute arises,—the father, who is naturally of a bilious temperament, instead of curbing his passions, lets them loose, creating a spirit of malevolence between husband and wife. This is at the family board; the wife leaves the table. Immediately after breakfast the family are called to prayers. The wife refuses to come, perhaps saying that prayer and anger are inconsistent, therefore she does not wish to hear her husband pray. The children see and follow the examples of their parents. The father tells them of the sin of quarrelling, threatens, and perhaps punishes them. Many a time have the children resolved and re-resolved to be kind and affectionate; but still they go on, and have been going on in the path of discord these twelve years. The elder children have often spoken of the bad government of the parents—of the examples they have set, and of the unhappiness brought on the family by the father's giving way to his temper. Perhaps they are then censured for reproaching their parents, with anger, or else the father says the wife acts so bad, and he is so troubled with sickness, that it is impossible to restrain his anger, but if he does wrong they should not follow his example.

Now I would make a few interrogatories. "Canst a man in a great measure, if not wholly, restrain his bad passions, no matter how severe his trials? If so, is not this parent mistaken, and ought he not to be informed of it? Is it not wrong for a Christian parent to correct his children in wrath? When parents quarrel, can it be expected otherwise of their children, and if that parent wishes to live in peace, should he not begin to live so himself? Is it proper for children to tell their parents when they do wrong, if they do so in an affectionate manner?"

But to relate what transpired the last Sunday morning that I breakfasted at their house. One of those usual disputes arose, and a like result happened. The wife left the table, the family were called to prayers; she refused to come. After prayers were over, the youngest boy goes into the kitchen and finds the servant reading a book which belongs to himself, asks him for it, but is refused. The child then tells the father; but the father says, "let him read it." The child then tells him that "it is a book improper to read on the Sabbath." The father then says, "but if he is not reading that he will be doing something worse." One of the elder children then interferes and says, "I should think the servant better have some other book to-day, as that is unfit for to-day"—at which the father gets angry and says, "you mind your own business." The child, tenacious of her opinion, keeps on talking and endeavors to bring in argument to support what she has said—and immediately you hear words that will become a father and child. Now are not these things wrong? Is it not wrong to let our children, or those under our care, commit small sins, in order that they may keep out of greater ones? The children also do wrong, and I could say things equally derogatory about them; but my design has been only to speak here of the fountain head. If this should meet the eyes of those parents, I hope they will see the error of their way, and know that this is from a true friend.

A new benefit of the Temperance Reformation.—Says a reformed drunkard—"Drunkards always have bad wives. I have often been with more than a dozen fellow inebriates, and when conversing about our wives, it was invariably found we all had bad wives. I would say to inebriates, since I have become a sober man I find I have a good wife as any man can have. From the bottom of my heart I will say to you, ray the magic temperance pledge, and I have no doubt you will experience the same happy result."

## ANTI-ULTRA-RADICAL-REVOLUTIONARY.

These are now the watchwords of a certain class of religious teachers and writers of periodicals—especially presidents of colleges, professors in theological seminaries, and city clergymen. One of them has published a whole volume of sermons against Anti-ism; two have published sermons and another a letter against Ultraism; another a labored series of articles in a quarterly against Radicalism, and we know not how many have expressed their horror of such Revolutionary movements as the abolition of slavery or dissolving the union of church and state, and especially the hereditary peerage of Great Britain. We might smile at these anile fears, and at the ludicrous position in which Americans, and especially followers of the Puritans, of Roger Williams, and of John Knox, present themselves while striving to shield ancient abuses from the searching operations of truth and a reforming age; but we are more disposed to weep when we consider that these well-disposed but timid persons are unwittingly sharpening arrows against Christianity itself, the great exemplar of all these dreaded principles.

1. ANTI-ISM. Jesus Christ came into the world to establish a universal Anti-ism against sin and the father of it. The Church itself is an Anti-sin Society, called upon to maintain a continued warfare, to pull down strong holds, to fight a good fight, to be bold, to endure hardness as good soldiers, to destroy the works of the devil, &c. When Anti-ism is put down, the church will be brought back to that state, so delectable in the view of indolence and worldliness, when it maintained no warfare & attempted no encroachments upon Satan's dominions, and was at peace. Ah! that treacherous peace! The Son of Man came not to send peace but a sword—to kindle a fire on the earth—and what will I if it be already kindled?

2. ULTRAISM. Jesus Christ was so far from indulging this continual fretfulness and fear about carrying religious principles too far, that he himself drove them at once to the very plus ultra—so far that there is nothing beyond it. His rules of forgiveness, of liberality, of self-denial, of brotherly love, of holiness in all its branches, are of the extreme character, and do not admit of being carried any farther. And when Ultraism shall be put down, Christianity will be despoiled of the moral power which she has from the injunction, Be ye PERFECT.

3. RADICALISM. When the forerunner of the Saviour made his appearance, one of the most impressive of his announcements was, "Now, also, the axe is laid to the ROOT of the tree." And Jesus Christ, in all his instructions, maintained the same radical character. He aimed at the root of the evil in the world. He undertook to make a radical change in the affairs of men, by effecting a radical renovation in their character. The true spirit in his church is like that of her Master. And when her ministers busy themselves with pulling at the twigs or lopping off the branches of evil—in other words, when they abandon the ground of CHRISTIAN RADICALISM, they may gain the love of the world and be called men of the world, but sin laughs at their feeble efforts.—What progress was made in the removal of intemperance, until the blow was aimed at the root—moderate drinking? How long did British slavery stand, yea, and strengthen itself, until Christian heroism went to work radically, by proclaiming the glorious doctrine of immediate Emancipation?

4. REVOLUTIONISM. Our thoughts were specially directed to this by seeing in our religious quarterlies so great solicitude to preserve the British church-and-state union from revolution, and by reading other recent clerical lamentations over the revolutionary spirit of the times. We cannot enlarge on this point, but only suggest that the Christian religion is the grand engine of revolutions in the world, and will continue to be so to the millennium; and we shall see whose word will stand, that of the Doctors deprecating revolutions, or that of the Almighty decreeing them: "I will overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him."—New-York Evangelist.

## A SOLEMN APPEAL

IN BEHALF OF THE CAUSE OF PEACE.

SEC. 10. Christians ought to labor and pray for the abolition of war, because it is the greatest of all obstacles to the spread of the Gospel both at home and abroad.

I have, in the preceding pages, noticed some particular modes in which the custom of war promotes sin and vice, and opposes piety and virtue; but I have not named all the vices and sins which follow in its train. Besides murder, robbery, theft, falsehood, intemperance, lasciviousness and sabbath breaking, duelling, &c., I might mention other sinful practices which follow in the wake of war; for there is, perhaps, not a single vice, of which this fallen world is guilty, which war does not draw after it. Vices have a moral affinity to each other. They seldom appear alone, but come in clusters. Such are the bitter fruits of war, and "a tree is known by its fruit."

If the moral evils of war, by which it sinks millions of precious souls into endless perdition, were confined to the Christian nations that carry it on, there would surely be sufficient cause for the most active opposition to it, and for humble and fervent prayer to God for its cessation; but the exceeding sinfulness of war does not end here. It is "evil, only evil, and that continually;" and sheds its blighting influence on heathen nations, and is the greatest of all obstacles to their conversion. Christians not only have destroyed one another during the past century more than pagans or Mahometans, but the history of their settlements in heathen lands is written in letters of blood. The sword has preceded the Gospel, and extermination has followed it. No wonder it is so difficult to convert the heathen to christianity.

As, in Christian lands, men of the world judge of Christianity more by the conduct of Christians than by the word of God, so the heathen read the Gospel in the history and example of Christian nations, rather than in the Bible. The natives of India have seen the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English, bearing the standard of the cross, arrive on their shores, and, after having spread their conquests by fire and sword, turn on each other their deadly weapons, while contending for the spoils. "If this be christianity," say they, "we want no such bloody religion." The emperor of China refused the admittance of the Christian religion into his vast empire, because, said he, "wherever Christians go, they whiten the soil with human bones."

O, I could write page after page to show, by historical facts, that war has been the greatest of all obstacles to the spread of the Gospel among heathen nations, and generation after generation have gone down to hell, without the knowledge of a Redeemer, on account of this horrible custom among his professed followers.—How can the church clear the skirts of her garments from the blood of these poor benighted heathen, while it tolerates a custom which has barred them out of heaven? But I believe the detail is unnecessary. Every one acknowledges the abstract truth, and most Christians are content to stop there.

One recent event, however, I must notice. In the islands of the Pacific Ocean, the natives had seen little or nothing of christian warfare. They readily embraced christianity. Its peaceful, humbling truths took hold on their feelings. They were converted to christianity. They read the Gospel; they saw clearly that it prohibited war. They did not beat their spears into pruning-hooks, for happily they had no vineyards, but they converted the points of them into instruments of husbandry, and took the shafts to make railings for the pulpit stairs. War was banished from among them, to the astonishment of the missionaries, who, it seems, were not prepared for such results from the preaching of the Gospel, and it led them to consider whether the Gospel allowed of war, and they were converted to the principles of peace by their own disciples. They thus gather from the declaration of Rev. Mr. Ellis, who adds, "The last pulpit stairs I ascended in Rurutu were railed with warriors' spears." But mark the change, since the natives have seen more of Christians, so called. They find that Christians bite and devour one another, and they have left the precepts of Christ to follow the practice of his professed disciples. Now let us see the consequences. In the Missionary Herald of March, 1834, the effect of war and intemperance is thus described by the Rev. Mr. Orsmond, an English missionary in the Society Islands. "The insubordination, confusion and disregard to the ordinary restraints, which the occurrence of actual war produced, appears, as was to be apprehended, to have increased these evils; viz. the evils of intemperance. In reference to the effect of war on many of the people, the same writer, after speaking of their intemperance, observes, 'I have seen more wickedness within the last two weeks than in sixteen years before.' The ordinances of the church were discontinued, and these once peaceful nations have sunk back to nearly their original state. The Rev. Mr. Simpson, missionary at Eimeo, says, 'Our people returned from Tahiti dreadfully chagrined, [they had been defeated] and in their anger, for a time, determined to abandon both law and gospel. A great falling off in our adult and children's school followed, and has continued to a great extent to the present time.'—The spears have disappeared from Rurutu, and the nations fight, like Christians, with muskets. That rum has been, in part, the cause of the deplorable change, I grant. New-England rum and Old England muskets, like Herod and Pilate, have agreed in crucifying the Prince of Peace afresh. But mark the difference with which they are treated by Christians. Resolves have been passed against rum by many a body of Christians, but who among them all has thought of condemning war?

Ought not Christians to labor and pray that a custom so destructive to religion, both at home and abroad, should be abolished?

## The New Year

Reader, how do you intend to spend the year to come? In doing good to your fellow creatures—in loving and serving your Creator? As this may be your last year, let it be your serious and constant inquiry, How shall I spend it for the promotion of the greatest good? Lose no time in idleness and vice, in thoughtlessness and folly, but let acts of justice and mercy fill up your days, and your last hours will be cheered with the prospects of eternal felicity.

The latter part of a wise man's life, is employed in curing the follies, prejudices and false opinions, which he had contracted in the former.

He who wants good sense is unfortunate in having learning; for he thereby has more ways of exposing himself. Drinking-water, neither makes a man sick—nor in debt—nor his wife a widow.

## FINNEY'S LECTURES.

## LECTURE VI.

## SPIRIT OF PRAYER.

TEXT.—Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.—ROMANS viii. 26, 27.

I propose to show, I. What Spirit is here spoken of. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities."

II. What that Spirit does for us.

III. Why he does what the text declares him to do.

IV. How he accomplishes it.

V. The degree in which he influences the minds of those who are under his influence.

VI. How his influences are to be distinguished from the influences of evil spirits, or from the suggestions of our own minds.

VII. How we are to obtain this agency of the Holy Spirit.

VIII. Who have a right to expect to enjoy his influences in this matter—or for whom the Spirit does the things spoken of in the text.

1. What Spirit is it, that is spoken of in the text?

Some have supposed that the Spirit spoken of in the text means our own spirit—our own mind. But a little attention to the text will show plainly that this is not the meaning. "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities," would then read, "Our own spirit helpeth the infirmities of our own spirit,"—and "Our own spirit likewise maketh intercession for our own spirit." You see you can make no sense of it on that supposition. It is evident from the manner in which the text is introduced, that the Spirit referred to is the Holy Ghost. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." And the text is plainly speaking of the same Spirit.

II. What the Spirit does.

Answer.—He intercedes for the saints. "He maketh intercession for us," and "helpeth our infirmities," when "we know not what to pray for as we ought." He helps Christians to pray according to the will of God, or for the things that God desires them to pray for.

III. Why is the Holy Spirit thus employed?

Because of our ignorance. Because we know not what we should pray for as we ought. We are so ignorant both of the will of God, revealed in the Bible, and of his unrevealed will, that we ought to learn it from his providence. Mankind are vastly ignorant both of the promises and prophecies of the Bible, and blind to the providence of God. And they are still more in the dark about those points of which God has said nothing but by the leadings of his Spirit. You recollect that I named these four sources of evidence on which to ground faith in prayer—promises, prophecies, providences, and the Holy Spirit. When all other means fail of leading us to the knowledge of what we ought to pray for, the Spirit does it.

IV. How does he make intercession for the saints? In what mode does he operate, so as to help our infirmities?

Not by superseding the use of our faculties. It is not by praying for us, while we do nothing. He prays for us, by exciting our own faculties. Not that he immediately suggests to us words, or guides our language. But he enlightens our minds, and makes the truth take hold of our souls. He leads us to consider the state of the church, and the condition of sinners around us. The manner in which he brings the truth before the mind, and keeps it there till it produces its effect, we cannot tell. But we can know as much as this—that he leads us to a deep consideration of the state of things; and the result of this, the natural and philosophical result, is, deep feeling. When the Spirit brings the truth up before a man's mind, there is only one way in which he can keep from deep feeling. That is, by turning away his thoughts, and leading his mind to think of other things. Sinners, when the Spirit of God brings the truth before them, must feel. They feel wrong, as long as they remain impenitent. So if a man is a Christian, and the Holy Spirit brings a subject into warm contact with his heart, it is just as impossible he should not feel, as it is that your hand should not feel if you put it into the fire. If the Spirit of God leads him to dwell on things calculated to excite warm and overpowering feelings, and he is not excited by them, it proves that he has no love for souls, nothing of the Spirit of Christ, and knows nothing about Christian experience.

2. The Spirit makes the Christian feel the value of souls, and the guilt and danger of sinners in their present condition. It is amazing how dark and stupid Christians often are about this. Even Christian parents let their children go right down to hell before their eyes, and scarcely seem

to exercise a single feeling, or put forth an effort to save them. And why? Because they are so blind to what hell is, so unbelieving about the Bible, so ignorant of the precious promises which God has made to faithful parents. They grieve the Spirit of God away, and it is in vain to try to make them pray for their children, while the Spirit of God is away from them.

3. He leads Christians to understand and apply the promises of Scripture. It is wonderful that in no age have Christians been able fully to apply the promises of Scripture to the events of life, as they go along. This is not because the promises themselves are obscure. The promises themselves are plain enough. But there has always been a wonderful disposition to overlook the Scriptures, as a source of light respecting the passing events of life. How astonished the apostles were at Christ's application of so many prophecies to himself! They seemed to be continually ready to exclaim, "Astonishing! Can it be so? We never understood it before." Who, that has witnessed the manner in which the apostles, influenced and inspired by the Holy Ghost, applied passages of the Old Testament to gospel times, has not been amazed at the richness of meaning which they found in the Scriptures? So it has been with many a Christian; while deeply engaged in prayer, he has seen that passages of Scripture are appropriate which he never thought of before, as having any such application.

I once knew an individual who was in great spiritual darkness. He had retired for prayer, resolved that he would not desist till he found the Lord. He knelt down and tried to pray. All was dark, and he could not pray. He rose from his knees, and stood a while, but he could not give it up, for he had promised that he would not let the sun go down before he had given himself to God. He knelt again, but it was all dark, and his heart was hard as before. He was nearly in despair, and said in agony, "I have grieved the Spirit of God away, and there is no promise for me. I am shut out from the presence of God." But his resolution was formed not to give over, and again he knelt down. He had said but a few words when this passage came into his mind as fresh as if he had just read it. It seemed as if he had just been reading the words, "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Jer. xxix. 13. He saw that though this promise was in the Old Testament, and was addressed to the Jews, it was still as applicable to him as them. And it broke his heart, like the hammer of the Lord, in a moment. And he prayed, and rose up, happy in God. Thus it often happens when professors of religion are praying for their children. Sometimes they pray, and are in darkness and doubt, feeling as if there was no foundation for faith, and no special promises for the children of believers. But while they are pleading, God has shown them the full meaning of some promises, and their soul has rested on it as on the mighty arm of God. I once heard of a widow who was greatly exercised about her children, till this passage was brought powerfully to her mind: "Leave thy fatherless children with me, I will preserve them alive." She saw it had an extended meaning, and she was enabled to lay hold on it, as it were, with her hands; and then she prevailed in prayer, and her children were converted. The Holy Spirit was sent into the world by the Saviour, to guide his people, and instruct them, and bring things to their remembrance, as well as to convince the world of sin.

4. The Spirit leads Christians to desire and pray for things of which nothing is specifically said in the word of God. Take the case of an individual. That God is willing to save is a general truth. So it is a general truth that he is willing to answer prayer. But how shall I know the will of God respecting that individual, whether I can pray in faith according to the will of God for the conversion and salvation of that individual, or not? Here the agency of the Spirit comes in, to lead the mind of God's people to pray for those individuals, and at those times, when God is prepared to bless them. When we know not what to pray for, the Holy Spirit leads the mind to dwell on some object, to consider its situation, to realize its value, and to feel for it, and pray, and travail in birth, till the person is converted.—This sort of experience I know is less common in cities, than it is in some parts of the country, because of the infinite number of things to divert the attention and grieve the Spirit in cities. I have had much opportunity to know how it has been in some sections. I was acquainted with an individual who used to keep a list of persons that he was specially concerned for; and I have had the opportunity to know a multitude of persons for whom he became thus interested, who were immediately converted. I have seen him pray for persons on his list, when he was literally in an agony for them; and have sometimes known him call on some other person to help him pray for such a one.—I have known his mind to fasten thus on an individual of hardened, abandoned character, and who could not be reached in any ordinary way. In a town in the north part of this state, where there was a revival, there was a certain individual who was a most violent and outrageous opposer. He kept a tavern, and used to delight

in swearing at a desperate rate, whenever there were Christians within hearing, on purpose to hurt their feelings. He was so bad, that one man said he believed he should have to sell his place, or give it away, and move out of town, for he could not live near a man that swore so. This good man, that I was speaking of, was passing through the town, and heard of the case, and was very much grieved and distressed for the individual. He took him on his praying list. The case weighed on his mind, when he was asleep and when he was awake. He kept thinking about him, and praying for him for days. And the first we knew of it, this ungodly man came into a meeting, and got up and confessed his sins, and poured out his soul. His bar-room immediately became the place where they held prayer meetings.—In this manner the Spirit of God leads individual Christians to pray for things which they would not pray for, unless they were led by the Spirit. And thus they pray for things according to the will of God.

By some, this may be said to be a revelation from God. I do not doubt that great evil has been done by saying that this kind of influence amounts to a new revelation. And many people will be afraid of it if they hear it called a new revelation, so that they will not stop to inquire what it means, or whether the Scriptures teach it or not. They suppose it to be a complete answer to the idea.—But the plain truth of the matter is, that the Spirit leads a man to pray. And if God leads a man to pray for an individual, the inference from the Bible is, that God designs to save that individual. If we find by comparing our state of mind with the Bible, that we are led by the Spirit to pray for an individual, we have good evidence to believe that God is prepared to bless him.

6. By giving to Christians a spiritual discernment respecting the movements and developments of Providence. Devoted, praying Christians often see these things so clearly, and look so far ahead, as greatly to stumble others. They sometimes almost seem to prophecy. No doubt persons may be deluded, and sometimes are so, by leaning to their own understanding when they think they are led by the Spirit. But there is no doubt that a Christian may be made to see and discern clearly the signs of the times, so as to understand, by providence, what to expect, and thus to pray for it in faith. Thus they are often led to expect a revival, and to pray for it in faith, when nobody else can see the least signs of it.

There was a woman in New Jersey, in a place where there had been a revival. She was very positive there was going to be another. She insisted upon it that they had had the former rain, and were now going to have the latter rain. She wanted to have the conference meetings appointed. But the ministers and elders saw nothing to encourage it, and would do nothing. She saw they were blind, and so she went forward and got a carpenter to make seats for her, for she said she would have meetings in her own house. There was certainly going to be a revival. She had scarcely opened her doors for meetings, before the Spirit of God came down in great power. All these sleepy church members found themselves surrounded all at once with convicted sinners. And they could only say, "Surely the Lord was in this place, and we knew it not." The reason why such persons understand the indication of God's will is not because of the superior wisdom that is in them, but because the Spirit of God leads them to see the signs of the times. And this, not by revelation, but they are led to see that by converging of providences to a single point, which produces in them a confident expectation of a certain result.

V. In what degree are we to expect the Spirit of God to affect the minds of believers? The text says, "The Spirit maketh intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered." The meaning of this I understand to be, that the Spirit excites desires too great to be uttered except by groans. Something that language cannot utter—making the soul to full to utter its feelings by words, where the person can only groan them out to God, who understands the language of the heart.

VI. How are we to know whether it is the Spirit of God that influences our minds or not?

1. Not by feeling that some external influence or agency is applied to us. We are not to expect to feel our minds in direct physical contact with God. If such a thing can be, we know of no way in which it can be made sensible. We know that we exercise our minds freely, and that our thoughts are exercised on something that excites our feelings. But we are not to expect a miracle to be wrought, as if we were led by the hand, sensibly, or like something whispered in the ear, or any miraculous manifestation of the will of God. Individuals often grieve the Spirit away, because they do not harbor him and cherish his influences. Sinners often do this ignorantly. They suppose that if they were under conviction by the Spirit, they should have such and such mysterious feelings, a shock would come upon them, which they could not mistake.—Many Christians are so ignorant of the Spirit's influences, and have thought so little about having his assistance in pray-